How Admiral Milne was dished, page 1690.

Modern Life

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SNUBBED SOME.

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

Belgium's Lady of Sorrows and our two Queens.

The meeting between Queen Alexandra and the Queen of the Belgians was, I hear, very touching. The Belgian Queen wept upon Queen Alexandra's breast, and almost refused to be comforted. The Queen Mother drew forth her smelling salts, and took the Belgian Queen into her own snuggery alone, where their confidences were exchanged in secret. The Belgian Queen first drove down to Buckingham Palace, and was received with great tenderness by Queen Mary, but as an old-time feud exists between the Wurttemburg family (which is Queen Mary's house) and the Grand Ducal family of Bavaria, the Belgian Queen's house, it was not to be expected that after so many years all frigidity could be overcome. But as soon as lunch at the Palace was over, and the Belgian Sovereign found herself within the portals of Marlborough House, her Majesty gave herself over to her grief in the motherly arms of Queen Alexandra, who, I am able to state, positively assured the fugitive lady, "on the word of her son, the King," that all would be well, and that King Albert's tenure of the Belgian throne should last until his death, however many ups and downs of fortune might attend him and his before the peace of Europe was proclaimed in Buckingham Palace.

* * *

Why Prince Christian's only son is fighting for the Kaiser.

Another interesting visitor at the Palace lately has been old Prince Christian, who called upon King George and Queen Mary ostensibly as an old friend of the Belgian King and Queen, and to support her Majesty in the trying ordeal of making her formal appeal to our own monarchs for their hospitality in her country's time of trial, and also in the capacity of the father of a British prince who is fighting on the side of the Kaiser. I said something about this a week or two ago, but on reading what I wrote it occurred to me that unwittingly I might have wounded some feelings, which it was certainly not my intention to do. It is true, of course, that Prince Christian's only son is fighting for the Kaiser, although his father lives in a beautiful residence at Windsor, Cumberland Lodge, granted him by the King of England, and his mother is a sister of King Edward, and aunt to King George. Lest these simple facts be construed into a suggestion that Prince Albert or his venerable father, Prince Christian, are disloyal to this country, let me add a word of explanation.

Where Loyalty is a Difficult Problem.

Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein, who is now in the field with the forces of the Kaiser, is not strictly a Prince of Great Britain and Ireland, although he is in direct succession to the Throne of this country. In Britain, in spite of the absence of the Salic Law, the dynasty is derived from the father. Hence King Edward was the first monarch of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty, although his mother, from whom he derived the crown, was a Hanoverian Sovereign. So Prince Albert, though an Englishman by birth and breeding, is really a Prince of the Royal Family of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenborg, and when he and his elder brother got to man's estate, it was perhaps natural enough that the elder should join the British Army, and the younger that of the Deutschland.

Now that there is war, it could hardly be expected that Prince Albert could desert the Kaiser for England, seeing that he is now responsible for the conduct of a distinguished German regiment, and that the Kaiserin is a member of the Sonderburg branch of the House of Schleswig-Holstein. Prince Albert's elder brother laid down his life for England in South Africa a dozen years ago; we sincerely hope no such ill-luck will attend Prince Albert in France in 1914.

* * *

How Sir Berkeley Milne was Dished.

One of the nuttiest mysteries of the war, which, even at the United Service Club, remains unexplained, is what happened in the matter of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*. Of this little matter all that the British public knows is that the two German ironclads were caught in the Mediterranean upon the outbreak of the war, that they were admitted into Messina harbour, then warned off as belligerents, emerged within the allowed twenty-four hours, and were next heard of up the Dardanelles, whence they were sold to Turkey, and were thus saved from being attacked by British battleships. But what the public do not know is, How came these two magnificent prizes to give the British Admiral the slip, and without firing one shot in their own defence? This is the greatest mystery of the war. And here is the explanation given to me by one of our most distinguished admirals.

* * *

Why No British Attack Was Made.

At the time the *Goeben* and *Breslau* were caught "like rats in a trap" (as it then seemed), with Port Said at one end of the "Blue" and Gibraltar at the other, the French had a powerful fleet in Mediterranean waters, and the British were represented by Sir Berkeley Milne with the *Inflexible*, *Indomitable* and *Intractable*, and a number of escorting cruisers. The fate of the two German warships seemed so certain that Sir Berkeley Milne was either ordered, or preferred, to keep clear of an action, in which any of his Dreadnoughts might have gone under. No one will blame him for that. In any case, the *Goeben* and *Breslau* were lost to Germany. But the trick of selling the ships to Turkey simply caught Sir Berkeley napping. It was a contingency which had never occurred to him.

When, therefore, he followed the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* to the entrance to the Dardanelles, he shook hands with himself, assuming that they were panic-stricken and had walked into the net blindfold. Turkish duplicity had never been thought of, and no one was more astonished than Sir Berkeley Milne when he heard that the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* had hoodwinked him, with, of course, the assistance of that arch-traitor, the Sultan of Turkey. God help his holiness the Khalifa if Sir Berkeley is ever called upon to bombard "Constant"—a contingency, I may add, which is about the most likely thing to happen within the realm of probabilities. Anyway, the *Goeben* and *Breslau* being lost, Sir Berkeley handed the Mediterranean over to a French admiral, came home, and called upon King George with explanations, what time his flagship and the others went up the North Sea, and were in luck's way at last, for they did most of the fighting in the gallant affair of the Heligoland Bight. So Sir Berkeley Milne comes out of the *Goeben* affair

with his honour untarnished, and we give this story, as the impression that he failed in that matter is bound to be left on the public mind, unless the truth about it is told, as it is here, for the first time.

* * *

The Ducal Dare-Devil at the Front.

Just as I anticipated, the Duke of Westminster has been up to his dare-devil tricks, and at the very first opportunity. I am accustomed to my forecasts of events coming true to the letter, but the Duke's verification of my anticipation of a fortnight ago has been almost uncanny. On August 29th, I said "I shouldn't be surprised in the least to hear that the Duke was a prisoner in the hands of the Deutschers, or had been shot dead for refusing to surrender. You can't help admiring this mad son of a hundred earls, who has been on the edge of Kingdom Come a score of times, and seems determined to lose his life without the stigma of self-destruction." And, of a verity, the Duke has been asking for it, and no mistake. His scampering off with the wounded Captain Grenfell on his back under a killing fire will live in the brightest annals of our Twentieth Century aristocracy, and his many other deeds of valour will render him at once the most human and the most popular of all our peers!

* * *

No Yankee Duchesses for Northants.

Lord Euston has broken it off with Miss Havemeyer, and so there will be no American Duchess at Wakefield Lodge, or in Suffolk. Lord Euston was at first willing to sacrifice himself to his son's necessity, for it is certain that young Lord Ipswich will have to screw all his life unless the family fortunes are augmented. Not that the Graftons should be poor. But Mr. Lloyd George has hit them hard, and the Duke's efforts to sell up in Northamptonshire have not been over-successful. Lord Euston was regarded as something of a "hero" when he announced his engagement to the American millionairess, for the Graftons have always been very exclusive, descending, as they do, from Charles II., and having little in common with the aristocracy of Hanoverian days.

* * *

The Strawberry Leaves by no means a "Cert!"

Miss Havemeyer may have reflected, too, that her money might not have been well spent, for her chances of being a British Duchess were by no means secure. Lord Euston is in the sixties, and there is no knowing how long the old Duke may live. He is now in his ninety-fourth year, and uncommonly fit. Neither accident nor rheumatism seems to damp his sporting ardour, and as his Grace has outlived all his other sons, he may outlive Lord Euston, and thus leave the strawberry leaves to young Lord Ipswich "right away!" This would leave Miss Havemeyer without even a claim to a Peeress's place in the House of Lords, for, although she would be Countess of Euston, that title is only a courtesy one, borne by the heirs to the Dukes of Grafton. Probably, also, Miss Havemeyer has taken a leaf out of Mrs. Mosscockle's book, and "thought better of it."

* * *

The Cumberland Family and their Lost Throne in Hanover.

The map-makers, I hear, are already speculating as to how the After-the-War Map of Europe will arrange itself. When the German *débâcle* is followed by the payment of the German indemnity to England, and the cession of Heligoland, and a few more of her colonies, will the Duke of Cumberland's son be restored to his lost kingdom of Hanover, and that country be ruled henceforth by a King of our Hanover line as she was from the coming of George I. to this country. It is a pretty potentiality, and the only kink in it is that in order to get back his country in the form of the "Duchy of Brunswick," the heir of the dead Kings of Hanover recently married the Kaiser's only daughter! Already the

Old Gentleman: "My man, which is the quickest way to the London Hospital?"
Loafer: "Lumme, Guv'nor, you jist stand in the middle o' the road, and shout three cheers for the Kaiser."

"Mother, does the conductor keep all the money, or does he give some to the driver?"

Cumberland family must be sincerely regretting that opportunistic move! How little the war was foreseen a year ago is clearly proved by that marriage.

* * *

A Fatal Alliance.

For forty odd years the Duke of Cumberland had refused to meet the Kaiser, whose grandfather had despoiled the Duke's father of his kingly throne in Hanover, but when he saw the chance of getting Hanover back under the name of Brunswick, though without his crown, he consented to his son's marriage with the only daughter of the man he abhorred! Hence the Duke of Cumberland, though now rejoicing at the Kaiser's plight, must also be kicking his shins to think that when England was in the way of compelling the Kaiser to restore him his lost throne, he has put himself up against the head of his family (the Duke of Cumberland is, of course, a prince of Great Britain and Ireland, and not of Germany), and therefore may lose the one great opportunity of getting all he has waited fifty years for!

The reason the Kaiser's grandfather threw the Duke's father, the last King of Hanover, off his throne, was because when Hanover was asked with whom she would fight in the Austro-German war of 1866, the King of Hanover, who hated the Germans, sided with Austria, and as Austria was about as rotten then as she is now, the old Kaiser Wilhelm "did it" on the King of Hanover when peace was declared, and told him to clear out of the Deutschland, which he did, and died in exile, and was buried, as a grandson of our King George the Third, in Windsor Castle. All his life, therefore, his son, the Duke of Cumberland, has been awaiting the hour of his revenge and return to Hanover, under the ægis of Great Britain, and it must be gall and wormwood to the Duke to feel that just when the opportunity had come, he went and made it up with the Kaiser, and consented to that rotten alliance with the Hohenzollerns, which must necessarily destroy his chances with our King George when the re-arrangement of the map of Europe takes place.

* * *

When the Germans "Arrive!"

"Think what it means, my lad," said the Colonel, as he took his slim "Trichy" from his ripe, red lips. "Here is the frank admission of the *Daily Telegraph*. Didn't I tell you so!" And the dear old swank-pot read out the paragraph: "Victory by the Germans would mean the ultimate disappearance of our mercantile marine and our loss of India and Africa. It might even mean the absorption of the British Isles into the German Empire. Before that we should witness the awful scenes at Liége and Louvain repeated at Canterbury or Cambridge!" "Go hon!" said the hoseless Margate flapper in the x-ray skirt, "how are the Germans going to get here at all, when they haven't got any boats?"

"My dear innocent," exclaimed the Colonel, petulantly, "they have got enough boats at this moment to float enough Army Corps across the Silver Streak to smash up London! All that stops them is the British fleet in the North Sea!" "Well," replied the petticoatless one, "if the Germans *do* come, I do hope they try and raid England through the gaps between Walpole Bay and Broadstairs!" "Good heavens, girl," replied Aunt Sophia, tart and flustered. "And why, pray?" "Because if they come through some of the gaps they'll all die of the foul smells from the rotting sea-weed, before they get to terra cotta!" And the Colonel said, "Quite right, kiddy, quite right! I hope they'll come through the gaps of Margate!"

Ultimatums the Kaiser Can Still Issue.

If the German Kaiser has any more ultimatums to throw about, he can post off one to King Alfonso, and one to the President of the Portuguese Republic. Those for Denmark, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Monaco and Leichstenstein may be left another week or two. Our one-time pretty Princess Ena has sent £500 to the Prince of Wales's Fund, and as she has sent it, not as a Princess of Great Britain and Ireland, but as Queen of Spain, the Kaiser, an he likes, can construe the gift into a clear indication of Spanish feeling in regard to himself. As to Portugal, *Modern Life* was the only paper to secure the news that King Manoel had offered his services in the war on England's behalf. Now his ex-Portuguese Majesty has publicly confirmed our exclusive story of August 29th, and frankly announced in a message to the Chief of the Portuguese Royalists that "he had offered his services to the King of England," and he advised all loyal Portuguese to follow his example.

* * *

Is a Royal Intrigue Behind the War?

Which, of course, also confirms our story of the feud between the Berlin Hohenzollerns and the Hohenzollerns of Sigmaringen, of whom King Manoel's wife is the most prominent member. Our readers may also remember that in our issue for September 5th we noted that Queen Augusta Victoria's radiant looks as she drove into Buckingham Palace recently may have been due to King Manoel's being so keen on getting to the front. And thereby hangs the story of a Royal intrigue which Time's revenges may or may not consummate. It is no other than the chances of the Berlin Hohenzollerns being cleared off the Prussian throne in favour of the Sigmaringen line.

This would indeed be a triumph for the elder branch of the House of Hohenzollern, who have lived "in the shadows" too many centuries not to be a trifle jealous of their Berlin relations. If the European war were to turn on this tit-bit of Royal intrigue it would be history repeating itself with a vengeance, and, as before, in a very welter of gore! For it was a Royal intrigue of the Sigmaringen Hohenzollerns that caused the Franco-Prussian war of forty-four years ago. The resentment of Napoleon III. at the pretensions of the Prince of Hohenzollern to the Spanish throne, and his snub to Prussia over its abetting of the Prince's designs, were the immediate cause of all the trouble in 1870. The Sigmaringen Hohenzollerns failed to get the Spanish throne, but the Prince's brother got one not long after, when Roumania elected Prince Charles of Hohenzollern first King of Roumania, where he has remained ever since.

The new Pope has become a Benedict without ceasing to be a bachelor.

* * *

Bandsman Rice has re-enlisted in his old regiment, the Rifle Brigade. We hope he isn't going to be food for powder.

* * *

The shoeing smith of a cavalry regiment went into the fray armed only with his hammer. Some of the Uhlans at least now know what it is to fight hammer and tongs.

* * *

French engine-drivers have been ordered to drive at no more than 15 miles per hour during the war. We have reason to believe that the drivers on our line are Frenchmen.

* * *

ANOTHER OF ENGLAND'S HEROINES.

"Daintily gowned and with the glow of health on her cheeks, Miss Christabel Pankhurst walked into the offices of the *Daily Mail* yesterday afternoon to announce her return."

"Yes, dear. They broke into the Church and took a silver Communion Cup, and also, they say, the Vicar's stole."
"The Vicar stole! You don't say so? And we always looked upon him as a perfect gentleman."

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS.

THE "FREEDOM" OF THE PRESS.

The story in the papers to the effect that Lord Kitchener recently hauled up before him one of the most important of London editors, and told him, in reply to a tendency to argue, that he, Lord Kitchener, would send a squad of soldiers to invest a certain great newspaper office, if necessary, reads like the truth. We all know what Kitchener is, and that the above is precisely what he would be likely to do if his plans were being thwarted. We all know that the Secretary of State for War is a man who will stick at nothing to procure the end he has in view, if he thinks that end is in accord with the ultimate best interests of the public and the Empire. All of which is very excellent, and on account of it neither Lord Kitchener nor anyone else will ever receive from the thoughtful sections of the British public any harsh criticism in time of war. With one condition, though, be it carefully noted. The British public, ever a nation of shopkeepers, as Napoleon reminded us, wants its money's worth, even in time of war, and means to have it, and will always have it, notwithstanding the autocratic efforts of Lord Kitchener or any other member of the Government to refuse to deliver the goods in both weight and quality.

The goods are not being delivered at the present moment, either in weight or quality, so far as knowledge of the progress of the war is concerned. And that is where the shoe pinches. That is where even the great Secretary of State, who is so fond of having his own way in all things, has bitten off more than he can chew. That is where he will fail to retain the hold which he justly has achieved over the British public, unless with the greatest rapidity he learns the much-needed lesson that the public are getting sick and tired of being bamboozled and led astray over what is happening on the bloodiest and most ghastly battlefield in the whole of history. The freedom of the Press is being tampered with in a way that is monstrous from the point of view of British liberty. The public, who have to pay for this terrible war, who have to send their sons and brothers and husbands and fathers to fight, and gladly fight, for freedom against oppression, and for democracy against autocracy, are not going to stand being oppressed by a Press-tyrant right at their very doors. The Press Bureau, the greatest travesty of a Press organisation the world has ever seen, must be reformed from top to toe, or, better still, be swept away altogether. We want to know something about all this bloody business that is going on in France. We object to being treated as children any longer. There is reason in all things, and there must be some reason and commonsense inoculated into this wretchedly inefficient monstrosity called the Press Bureau, or the results will be dire indeed, not only for Lord Kitchener (who is responsible for everything that is going on), but for the Government, which he apparently controls by the lifting of his little finger.

How, in the name of common sense, can the public be expected to keep up their interest in the war for months, yes, and perhaps years, if they get practically no news from the front except the mean-nothing "muck" that is contained in the childish rigmaroles that are issued from the sanctum sanctorum of Mr. F. E. Smith? How, in the name of reason, can the people be expected to rush to the colours in the numbers that will be necessary before the war is finished, and to keep up the rush continuously, if their patriotism and enthusiasm are not kept at boiling point by truthful yet well-written accounts of what is really going on? I utterly defy anyone to tell what is going on from such stuff as Editor Smith is turning out at the present moment. The long rigmarole he sent out last Sunday, for instance, was, to anyone who understands the English language and the methods of lucid journalism, simply a concoction that was meant to hide a good deal more than it was meant to disclose. We have lost 15,000 good men and true on the battlefield, and we don't know how they were lost, why they were lost, how many of them will be recovered, why and how thousands of wounded were left behind to the mercy of the Germans, what defeats we have sustained, what victories we have achieved, or, indeed, anything about the real crux of the whole matter. It is monstrous. There is no sort of necessity for it. The German General Staff can learn all they want to know from the French and Continental papers, and they could not possibly learn any more if our English papers had war correspondents at the front, if the latter's "copy" were properly censored by the British Government.

It is ridiculous to suppose that English editors want to give the show away for the benefit of the German Army. Not even Lord Northcliffe, with all his hankering after journalistic fame and wealth, would be likely to do that. And, in any case, if British editors cannot be trusted, then the sooner the Government and Lord Kitchener suppress the newspapers altogether the better it will be for all concerned. But I know that they can be trusted, and, knowing this, I protest on behalf of the public, and on behalf of journalism, against the childish manner in which those who have to pay for the war are being treated by those in authority over us. It isn't playing the game. The truth is that Lord Kitchener, with all his wonderful brain for the organisation of soldiering, has no brain for appreciating, understanding, and adequately working the Parliamentary and freedom-loving traditions of the English people. He is a student of soldiering and an expert in autocracy. And the sooner he learns a little history, and especially the history of the temper and character of the English people, in adversity as well as in prosperity, the sooner will he recognise that even a little interference with the just demands of a free people can wreck, and rapidly wreck, the careers of even greater men than he, and put even such a powerful man as himself in his proper place as the servant, and not the ruler, of a people who have sucked in liberty from the torn and ragged breasts of the bleeding and suffering mothers of the British race.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

Mrs. Grundy's triumph. The Venus de Milo in the Louvre has been enclosed in armour plating.

* * *

The old custom of carrying a flag before a steam roller has not died out in Prussia, but there they are showing a white one.

* * *

THE RUSSIAN HORDES.

—*Daily Mail.*

Saving it up for Berlin?

* * *

Nearly every French soldier has been supplied with a brand-new uniform of blue cloth. It should have a killing effect.

* * *

The full staff of the Marylebone Corporation Electricity Department have enrolled as special constables. A shocking time is in store for somebody.

* * *

The Victoria League asks for names of persons willing to give addresses on the war. A visit to a few four-ale bars should be productive of a long list.

* * *

The boycott of German-made goods comes as a relief to a conscientious chemist of our acquaintance, who is at last able to tell the truth about his Eau de Cologne.

* * *

The German Chancellor says that England declared war just for the sake of a scrap of paper. In anticipation of the present famine prices of that article, no doubt.

* * *

A Redhill blacksmith with the aid of his dog collected £2 3s. 6d. in two hours for the local War Relief Fund." —*Evening News.* It seems a pity that he didn't have a couple of bull terriers and a revolver.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Whether it is not a fact that Queen Mary has intimated to the colonel of her son's battalion of the Grenadier Guards that she hopes the Prince will find himself in the firing line? And whether there is left any woman in the country who will jib at sending her son to the front after Queen Mary's inspiring example?

* * *

Whether Prince Henry and Prince George are not "as good as fighting" with their Boy Scout detachments?

* * *

And whether there is any member of the Royal Family who is not doing his full day's work for his country in its time of trial?

* * *

Where is the Duchess of Westminster, now that her husband is covering himself with glory, and if she is chortling at the result of the Duke's *in camera* action "in Chancery"? And whether the Princess of Pless is watching the Duke's violence against the Germans with interest, and "winking the other eye"?

* * *

Whether Lady Torrington will buy chocolates with her husband's pay as a trooper in the 19th Hussars, or whether she will hand it over to the Prince of Wales's Fund?

* * *

Whether the new Treaty of Alliance is not Sir Edward Grey's latest glory? And whether he does not well deserve the Garter that the King gave him two years ago—the only Commoner in living memory to receive it?

* * *

If there is not intense sympathy in the North with poor Mrs. Lambton, whose gallant young husband of two months has been killed in action? And whether a curious romance in the Earl of Durham's family will not be historically repeated if Mrs. Lambton should bear a son and heir to the Earldom?

* * *

Whether the fighting Keppels have not been very hard hit by the death and wounds of the two Captains Keppel in the war, and if it was not very good of Mrs. George Keppel to follow up the news with a gift of £100 to the Prince's Fund?

* * *

Whether a memorial will be erected to the magnificent stand of the Munsters and the Duke of Wellington's, and to the large number of officers who fell in their actions?

* * *

When Miss Marie Lloyd is to produce her new patriotic ditty about Tommy's farewell to his Liza?

* * *

If Mr. Astor's £45,000 for the War Fund is not much better than Mr. Vanderbilt's objection to the loss of his horses?

* * *

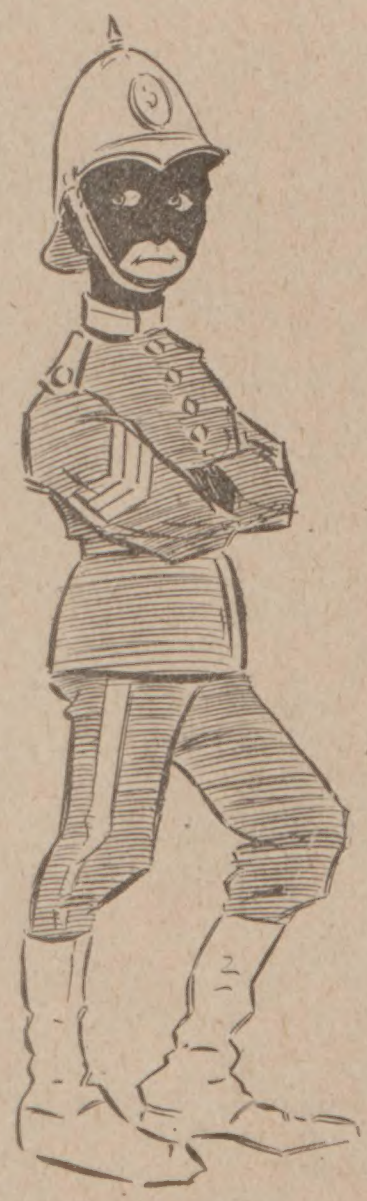
If, after our bulldog touch, we will be justified in renaming it the "Bite" of Heligoland?

* * *

Is our actor-airman finding his appropriate battle-ground in "Lorraine"?

* * *

Hasn't the blessed word "ultimatum" been sufficiently done to death by the gagsters of farce, revue and musical comedy?



A COLOUR SERGEANT.

What do the advertisements of the St. James's Theatre mean by "Those who sit in judgment in September"?

* * *

If Hildebrand Harmsworth's "Yellow Press" letter to the *Globe* wasn't a little ludicrous, seeing whence it emanated?

* * *

How soon will Miss Margery Maude's engagement be announced?

* * *

Is it true that Mr. Burns had saved £50,000 by the time he ceased to be a Cabinet Minister?

* * *

When Mr. George Edwardes escapes from Bad Neuheim, we wonder what he will say when approached with a new musical play "from the German"?

* * *

If Sir Herbert Tree was not very unsympathetic towards the youthful member of his company who stopped him in the passage to tell him all about her exciting escape from Mannheim?

* * *

If a large quantity of lace and perfume was smuggled into England at the beginning of the war?

* * *

If Lady Diana Manners is feeling very resentful that the war is so completely monopolising the newspapers just now?

* * *

What has become of poor Hamel's Martinsyde?

* * *

If King Manoel and Queen Augusta still continue ardent patrons of the kinema, and if the management of the Talbot Picture Palace, at Richmond, have built a small private box in the gallery for their especial use?

* * *

If the Gaiety is not very much at a loose end just now with its leading spirit a prisoner at Mannheim?

* * *

If there is any possibility of Britain being able to put into the field of war the one million trained men without which it is perfectly well known we cannot make good?

* * *

Whether, amongst the battle-pictures to be painted to the Kaiser's order by Herr Theodor Rocholl, His Imperial Majesty will order one or two *very large ones* to be painted of his infantry marching on the British troops at Mons, with a horde of inoffensive and terrified women and children in front of the German soldiers as a shield?

* * *

Why didn't C. B. Fry sign the cricketers' appeal for the Prince of Wales's Fund?

* * *

What his Catholic brother thinks of Monsignor A. C. Benson's declaration that "there is no hell"?

* * *

Which of our popular novelists boasts that he "never answers a letter," as he finds that in due time they answer themselves?

TABLOID TOPICS.

New swear-phrase for the modern Huns—"Mein Goth!"

* * *

The *Star*:—"Black sailors are being tried in the French navy." For what?

* * *

Things we could not have expressed better ourselves:
"War is war."—(The *Globe*.)

* * *

The riverside knut has been so alarmed by the "white feather campaign" that he is afraid even to feather his oar now.

* * *

At the fighting front are some lads just in their teens. In this way at all events our Army is being buoyed up.

* * *

A well-known Army aviator has just taken a second wife. Usually it is the wife of the aviator who takes a second husband.

* * *

A pamphlet, entitled "The Truth About the War," has just been published. It is announced under the heading of "New Fiction."

* * *

Daily Telegraph headline:
Revenue Returns.
We wish ours would!

* * *

"A notable new fashion in dress," says a lady's paper, "is the permission of curves." A sort of flanking movement, we presume.

* * *

We gather that the cheapest line in journalistic "copy" is now "Made in Germany." It is about as bad as their "Presents from Margate."

* * *

A motorist was fined the other day for colliding with a cow. He should have pleaded "not guilty" on the score that it did not blow its horn.

* * *

"If Kitchener had asked for half a million women he would have got them by first post," says the *Daily Mail*. Of course he would—he's a bachelor.

* * *

One of the picture papers presents War Lord William posed as Daniel. He will look the character better when in the British Lion's den—at St. Helena, say.

* * *

There is one point in favour of the very transparent hats which are now "all the rage" with the seaside flapper. The dear things have no difficulty in talking through them.

* * *

A New York man has been given nine months' imprisonment for kissing a girl. Heaps of men have landed themselves in for a life sentence on the strength of a similar offence.

* * *

An item at the promenade concerts the other evening was "The Flea Song"—but people going to the seaside may calm their fears. They have never been known to sing in this country.

* * *

From an article on "Sport and the War" in the *Globe*: "Golfers are not golfers and nothing more." Personally we never believed it: some of the poor wretches are husbands—in their spare time.

* * *

On returning to his camp near Shorncliffe a recruit slipped down a gravel pit, where he was discovered the following morning amusing himself gaily with an old tin flute. Surely this was playing it rather low down.

THESE TERRIBLE TIMES.

Scene I.—Jones's office, 10.30 a.m. Jones on telephone, talking to "wifie."

"Yes, darling, quite safely, thank you! No, love, I have not changed my coat yet. Too busy. News? Wait a minute, there is a boy shouting out the latest now. Hold the line! Are you there? Oh, he's calling out something about five hundred—I should say five thousand—Germans being killed. Not Official! Oh, yes, I know, there was something else I wanted to say to you! Gerald may come home with me to-night; he is taking a few days' holiday. What? Bring something for breakfast? Yes, love. Half a minute, someone has come in, I must ring off! Good-bye, don't be nervous. I don't expect the Germans will be here this week!"

Scene II.—Mrs. Brown's drawing room, Gossip Green. Afternoon sewing-party in progress. Mrs. Jones:

"Yes, dear, Freddie told me over the 'phone this morning, five hundred thousand Germans killed—official. Isn't it awful! Yes, I know it's better for us, but just think of it! I am so thankful we have started these sewing parties; we can make so many things for their widows and children. I know how to make such dinky little tea cosies and egg cosies to match; such a consolation to the poor dear things to have something bright about them in these terrible times! Really, I don't know how I should get through the day if our drawing-room windows did not face south. Even those we shall have to board up soon. Only think, Freddie says he thinks the Germans will be here this week. Oh, Mrs. Robinson, you don't mean to say you haven't got in any flour? No, I can't let you have any now. Why, we only have twenty sacks. But I have fifteen sides of bacon. I might be able to let you have a few rashers if that is any use. My idea is, though, if Freddie's business is bad, we could sell some of our provisions to the poor at quite a good price. Think how glad they will be to be able to buy them. Poor dears, I feel so for them. And we shall be able to make a nice little bit of money. It will be good for us all. 'Help one another,' is my motto for these terrible times.

"What's that? A telegram for me? Oh, something has happened to Freddie! I know it has! (Drops pink flannelette night cap into cake basket and snatches telegram).

"Oh! Oh!! Listen to this! 'G. fighting off Rochester expect arrive to-morrow. Freddie.' Oh, I must get back at once and barricade up. I left the drawing-room windows open too!" (General exodus of ladies, muttering "Germans off Rochester!")

Scene III.—Jones's front door. Jones arrives home late, to find sugar box lids nailed across windows and gate wired up. He vaults fence and tries to open front door. It is bolted from inside. Knocks loudly. Silence prevails. Knocks louder. He is tired and irritable, and in his pocket is the latest official news that nothing definite is known about the war again. He hears stealthy movements, the letter box is opened, and the barrel of an air-gun rests itself uncomfortably on his fourth waistcoat button. He retires rapidly round corner of ornamental lattice. A trembling voice says:

"Give the password!"

Jones: "Damn!"

Mrs. J. (from within): "Oh, it's you. I thought—Mary, don't throw that water! It's only master!" (From above a shower of water descends on Jones).

J. (spluttering violently): "Have you all gone mad? What the——!"

Mrs. J.: "Wait a minute! You are sure there are no Germans there?"

J.: "Germans?"

Mrs. J.: "Well, you said in your telegram, 'Germans fighting off Rochester,' and——"

J.: "I'm sure I didn't."

Mrs. J.: "I'll get the wire and read it to you!"

J.: "Well, you might at least let me in first." (Mrs. J. has gone. She returns reading wire). "G. *fishing* off Rochester expect arrive to-morrow!" (Loud gasps.

ACH!

She subsides in heap while J. tears away boards and makes his entry through dining-room window).

Mrs. J. (with dawn of enlightenment on her face): "Why, of course, G. means Gerald! Well, I never! I hope you have not brought anything extra for breakfast, as he is not coming. In these terrible times——"

There is a distant but violent slamming of a door. Mary screams from above, "They've shot the missus, I know they have!"

There is a boding silence over "Laburnum Lodge" for the rest of the evening.

NOEL HINTON.

The Albanian Wied has been uprooted.

* * *

London itself supplied in one day this week over 6,000 recruits for the new Army. A capital achievement.

* * *

A contemporary says that the Territorial makes a hash of his washing. We doubt whether even M. Escoffier could do this.

* * *

A boycott of English fiction is proposed by the Germans. They will find plenty of the home-made variety in the Berlin official war news.

BY THE WAY.

A fortnight ago in this column I did a grave injustice to Colonel Sir Arthur Davidson, Equerry to Queen Alexandra and Extra-Equerry to the King, in a paragraph which described his resentment at having a horse commandeered by the Sussex Yeomanry, and the snub he was said to have received in response to a protest to His Majesty. Sir Arthur Davidson, a distinguished soldier, quite naturally objects to any suggestion that he has put any obstacles in the way of the military authorities at such a crisis, and perhaps the best reparation I can make to him is to narrate the true story of the episode, which had been distorted out of all recognition before it reached my ears from a usually trustworthy source. Also, I offer my apologies to Sir Arthur for causing him pain and annoyance.

* * *

A few days ago, after some months in bed at Marlborough House with a painful affection of the veins, which made him temporarily practically a cripple, Sir Arthur went for a short rest and recuperation to his country house near Horsham. On the Saturday, while he was still lying almost helpless in bed, a Yeomanry sergeant appeared in his stable and pointing to its sole occupant, a small cob, instructed the groom to take it at once to the Yeomanry depot. The groom informed his master, who immediately said the horse must go—although he thought it hard for a cripple to be deprived of his only means of locomotion—if the sergeant produced the necessary warrant or form of requisition. The sergeant could not do so, and accordingly had to depart without the horse.

* * *

Next day (a Sunday) Sir Arthur had the horse harnessed, and, getting up from his sick-bed, drove round to the Yeomanry depot, the local Remount depot, and the Territorial depot. At each he offered to give up the horse at once, and at each he was told it was too small to be serviceable. The Yeomanry officer knew nothing whatever of the sergeant's visit, and said there must be some mistake, and later Lord March, in command of the Sussex Yeomanry, wrote to Sir Arthur apologising most profusely for the trouble he had been put to. That is the whole of the story except that the incident did come to the ears of the King, who remarked, "Poor fellow, and he a cripple!" (under the belief that Sir Arthur Davidson's solitary horse had been, or was about to be, commandeered) and telegraphed to Horsham suggesting that the horse should not be taken unless absolutely necessary, or, at any rate, until Sir Arthur was able to walk. But, of course, the King's kindly intervention was unnecessary, as the horse never was wanted—was indeed useless for military purposes.

* * *

Mr. F. R. Spofforth having added his voice to that of "W. G." by way of a protest against the playing of games while the enemy is at our gates, no more remains to be said. Certainly "Spoff" and the "Old Man" were the two greatest cricketers of their time, and the demon bowler of the 'eighties certainly hits the nail when he tells us that his sport-loving Colonial kinsmen are "chucking every other interest save that of the Motherland's fight." Though, as Sir W. S. Gilbert would have said, it has "nothing to do with the case," Spofforth's soubriquet of "the Demon" was not gained on account of his sheer pace as a bowler, but for the extraordinary manner in which he "mixed" his pace and spin.

* * *

I met Richard Harding Davis—whose timely words to his 'Murrican countrymen re German brutality should have borne fruit ere now—when he was here after the Spanish-American War. A splendidly-proportioned fellow and a capital war correspondent, he is also perhaps the greatest living master of the short story, save Morley Roberts. His "Soldiers of Fortune" is a thrilling book.

* * *

Mr. Harry Lawson's dignified contribution to the "ructions" in the House due to the wholesale censoring of war news, lost nothing by reason of his position at the "Daily Telegraph" and his friendship with the late Bennet Burleigh, who looks very much like going down to history as the last of the "great" war correspondents. Mr. Lawson is an Eton and Balliol man, and was for years commissioned in the Royal Bucks Hussars. He married a daughter of General Sir Henry de Bathe.

* * *

Mr. Cyril Maude and his brother Charles figure in the list of kinsmen of the young Viscount Hawarden, who died of his wounds the other day. The Irish Viscount descended to Colonel Maude, and the gallant young officer, cut off so early, inherited it in 1905. Maude is the De Montalts' family name, and they have generally been soldiers. Cyril Maude's parents were Captain and the Hon. Mrs. Maude, but he, ever a rover, "started life" on the stage in America when only twenty.

THE DIFFERENCE.

Wife: "My new dress will be a perfect dream, Jack."

Husband: "I daresay, but the bill will be a horrible nightmare."

I happened to be down at Pullborough last week, for the funeral of Lieutenant-Commander Nigel Barttelot, the gallant officer who died fighting on the bridge of the "Liberty" in the recent North Sea fight, and I learned from some of his men a few facts which, somehow or other, seem to have escaped the ubiquitous reporters of the daily Press. As has been announced, Commander Barttelot leaves a beautiful young widow and a baby-boy of some three years to mourn his loss. Alas! these are not the only [illegible] and Flowerday, who died of his wounds, a wife. The case of Dexter, another of the heroes, is particularly poignant, as I understand his wife gave birth to a child the day after the brave fellow's death while fighting for—for you and me, reader. And there is the case of the boy. Turner, whose last utterance to a chum, as he told me this sad story, was: "Oh . . . . My mother and father!" Will the nation will hear this and other cases? No greater stain could lie on the fair fame of England than that these devoted dependents of our brave dead should ever want for anything while a penny remains in the national Treasury. But there! the thing is unthinkable.

* * *

Among the German prisoners taken in the North Sea fight from the cruiser "Mainz" was a man of middle age, who spoke excellent and fluent English. "Hello!" said one of the officers of the "Arethusa," before whom he was brought, "you speak very good English. How's that?" "Well," was the reply, "I ought to. I have lived for twenty years in England, my daughter was born there, and three weeks ago I was shaving her young man at my shop in ——— Street, in the East End!" This story was told me by the officer referred to.

* * *

Now that he has grown a beard, Arthur Bourchier bears a marked resemblance to the one and only Shaw. The resemblance between the two men is, in fact, so extraordinary that a reporter of a theatrical paper the other day actually credited the playwright, who was present, with a speech delivered by the actor. Mr. Bourchier has given me a good story about this resemblance. "Do you know," he said, "that when Ellen Terry met me the first time in my Henry VIII. beard, she exclaimed, 'You look exactly like Bernard Shaw with a swelled head!'"

* * *

These are sad days in the pigeon world. A German friend of mine who keeps homing pigeons was visited by two policemen not many nights ago. They asked to be taken to the "loft." Arrived there the men in question coolly and calmly set to work to wring the neck of every bird in the place! As these racers were worth £5 each you can picture his feelings in the matter. As a matter of fact, he would be the last man in the world to use his birds for spying purposes, but from what he told me I can see that the authorities were perfectly justified in their action. It seems that the German Government have made a regular practice of subsidising homing lofts in the Fatherland. These are situated in the vicinity of forts, and only the very finest type of bird is kept. Germans coming over to this country have brought a bird or two with them, with the result that for the last few years birds have been systematically trained to fly from England to the Fatherland. Mr. Keir Hardie thinks that Germany didn't intend to attack us! Our Army and Navy keep no pigeons.

Mary: "Gertie borrowed a shilling from me yesterday, and paid me back to-day."
Flo: "Well, what about it?"
Mary: "She paid me back with the same shilling I lent her."
Flo: "That's strange."
Mary: "Not very. She couldn't change it, either."

"You Londoners have no idea of the activity of the military in the Eastern Counties," writes a friend who is spending a holiday in sleepy Suffolk. "The men in khaki are thoroughly bossing the show, and soldiers are everywhere. They are really awake, as the following little incident will show. Last night I had dinner with some friends, and I was cycling home at one o'clock in the morning. The air was nippy. I scudded along pretty fast, and was soon overtaking a figure on horseback. Just as I drew level the man—I now saw he was in uniform—dropped his cap, and I, of course, dismounted in order to pick it up. Just as I did so he flashed a bull's eye lantern on my face. I could not help laughing at his little ruse, but, as he explained to me afterwards, he had to satisfy himself of my nationality, and if he had merely challenged me—and I were a spy—I could easily have escaped in the darkness."

* * *

They are telling at the clubs a new story about Lord Kitchener which shows that the War Minister has got a softer heart than most people think. Not long ago K. of K. emerged from some friendly portal in Pall Mall accompanied by a friend. It was a wretched night, and rain was coming down in torrents. Just as the distinguished soldier had taken his seat in a taxi a grimy hand was thrust through the window and a newsboy begged Kitchener to buy a "piper." "It's the last one I have left, sir," he added. Kitchener bought the paper. "What are you going to do now?" he asked. "Go home," said the boy. "Where?" and the little heap of rags mentioned an East End street. The great Field Marshal called another cab. "Take this boy home," he said curtly, and he handed the man a generous fare.

THE LOITERER.

"What's in a name?" asks the Immortal Bard. Well, if he had happened to be alive to-day, and he had been called Herr Schmidt instead of Mr. Shakespeare, the probability is he would never have written that line.

MORE OR LESS.

Bay Leaves and Roses.

The Press has been so full of extracts from soldiers' letters that I make no apology for, in my turn, quoting from one found fluttering forlornly on the battlefield of Haelen. "If, as it now seems to me must happen," wrote the Belgian soldier, "it should prove impossible, Marie, for us to share together the happiness we both desired, I ask only one thing—that you forget me if you can, and console yourself with some other, remembering that there is always happiness in life." The "Marie" to whom the letter was written will probably never read it, for there was no address upon it; but I hope all the other Maries who read this will find comfort in the brave words: "There is always happiness in life." All the philosophy of the ancients is summed up in that simple sentence. Whatever happens, you see, the world goes on. Life never quite comes to a halt. So long as there is love left in the world and youth, just so long will a woman, sooner or later, take the bay leaves from her hair to make room for the roses. Absence never yet made a woman's heart grow fonder—unless it was of somebody else. We women are strange things. We can only love in the present tense.

* * *

Should a Man Tell?

This was the difficult problem propounded to me by a man the other day. "Should we tell our wives everything?" By everything, I suppose he meant the real reason for doing overtime at the office, the exact amount of time spent at work as compared with the time spent at billiards, betting, or other recreation, and so forth and so on. Well, of course, I'm not a wife, but if I were I am sure I should prefer not to know. It is all very well to say that to understand all is to forgive all, but this doesn't apply to married life. The less a woman knows about a man—especially the one she's got to live with—the better. Married life isn't all honey at best, and no self-respecting woman wants to live in a perpetual state of war, as she undoubtedly would were her husband suddenly to turn into a kind of x-ray of misdeed. Ignorance is bliss where it concerns a man. The cynic will probably assure me that it is folly to be wise where a woman is concerned. I agree. To run in double harness blinkers are indispensable.

* * *

Tout-à-Fait Chic.

I remember once greatly offending a critic by asserting in a book of mine that "I would sooner lose my character than my powder-puff on a hot day." He seemed to think I was a most unblushing person. Yet here, if you please, in my evening paper, I read of a lady whose first consideration, when awakened from her nap by the sudden rumour of Germans falling from the sky, was for her powder-puff. Wondering at the time whether her last moment had come, this lady none the less found herself standing in front of her looking-glass "slowly powdering her face" with the puff she had grabbed instinctively at the first sound of the terrific fire that seemed to shake the earth and "blow us to pieces." After she had attended to her complexion she found time to unlock her door and discover from an excited bootboy that all the clamour was due to friendly soldiers firing at a Zeppelin airship which, in the language of the bootboy, was "tout-à-fait chic." If this doesn't vindicate the importance of the powder-puff I don't know what can. It certainly carries out my contention that the average woman would sooner lose anything than her powder-puff, even if she had to yield her head or her heart as hostage.

* * *

Dew and Dew-ar.

The spring poet, like various other unlicensed performances, has so long been with us that we have grown to those of us, at least, who haven't got to listen to his effusions—to hail him more or less as a friend. But what shall be said of the war-poet, the songster who chirps merrily of blood and bullets and probably doesn't know one end of a gun from the other? The only adequate punishment for him, to my mind, is to set him, like Uriah, the Hittite, in the forefront of the battle. If one of his poems doesn't slay the Teuton who confronts him, I daresay the Teuton will oblige. Poets are a strange race. They wear the wrong kind of ties, and have the most tremendous appetites. I know old ladies imagine them to be radiant beings, who live almost entirely on dew and other unsubstantial things like that, but all the poets I ever met preferred to have their dew end in "ar," with a split soda. I knew a poet once—quite a well-known one now, that he is dead—who could only write when he was full of his muse, but of *crême de menthe*. His poems, however, so far from being green, were of the purple order and have achieved, thanks to a fairly businesslike executor, a certain amount of actual prosperity. I hope his descendants are properly grateful, for, as a general rule, it is better to be the ancestor of a poet than his descendant. Apart from financial reasons, you haven't got to listen to his verse.

LOUISE HEILGERS.

Being employed by one sort of man often spoils a girl for marrying the other sort.

* * *

A woman never loves a man very long after she has ceased to admire him.

Phyllis: "My husband says he will shoot anyone who dares to kiss me."
Ethel: "Has he got a Maxim gun?"

GETTING GERTIE OFF..

Gertie was one of those hapless girls one so often sees in a 'bus—alone. There was this distinguishing feature about Gertie—you never saw her with a boy. That was her great trouble. She was also one of those girls who never try to enliven a foggy day with a bit of rouge, she never troubled about thin stockings, because thick ones lasted longer, and she was the apostle of flannelette.

Her fellow typist at the office was quite different. Bettina had roses on the darkest days; Bettina seemed to live in an atmosphere of boxes of chocolate; Bettina's vanity-bag was always crammed with letters, post-cards, and telegrams, and she regarded Gertie with some sadness.

"You always seem to have been everywhere," Gertie murmured one day, as they sat in a Lyons' cafe, lunching together.

"Of course," Bettina smiled, "My boys take me. I'm going to Windsor for the day on Sunday. Where are you going?"

"Nowhere particular," Gertie replied dismally.

Bettina ordered another cream pastry.

"What is your boy like?" she asked carelessly. "He seems a bit of a misery."

"I haven't got a boy," Gertie explained.

Pretty Bettina looked at her in amazement.

"Not got a boy! Oh, great Scot, whatever is the matter with you? I have dozens—some abroad, but they all write to me and send me things. I've been engaged six times already!"

"I never had a sweetheart," said poor Gertie.

Bettina giggled:

"How old are you?" she inquired with some curiosity.

"I'm nearly twenty-five," Gertie sighed.

"And never been kissed?" Bettina said with a smile.

"No, never," said Gertie solemnly.

Bettina ordered vanilla ices, and smiled pleasantly at a passing young man in a homburg.

"I'll have to get you off," she said kindly. "This will never do."

Gertie sighed; she realised that this "getting off" is a fine art, and she didn't know if she possessed the requisite attributes.

* * *

One week later, on a Saturday afternoon, Gertie was fitted out with a "young man." He had regarded Bettina with longing eyes for some time, but he had not enough odd cash to appeal to her experienced nature, and so she volunteered to introduce a friend.

Gertie, realizing that this was neck or nothing, astonished her mother by suddenly coming out in grey stockings and a white neck ruffle and a new hat of daring design.

Her complexion remained the same.

The young man patiently listened to Bettina's explanations, but presently she said:

"Well, good-bye, Gertie. Hope you enjoy yourselves. Be good—or if you can't be good, be careful!"

"But where are you going?" Gertie asked in a panic.

"Oh, Billy is taking me to Hendon in his side-car," Bettina said airily. "Come on, Bill!"

* * *

The next day being Sunday, Bettina bumped into the "young man" she had so carelessly handed over to Gertie.

"Hullo," she said cheerily. "Did you have a good time together?"

He looked at her somewhat sternly.

"Here," he said, "were you having a lark with me? Why didn't you——?"

Bettina gave a shriek.

"Oh, you never tried to kiss her, did you?" she cried.

"No blooming fear," said the young man gloomily. "What do you take me for?"

"Well—what happened?"

"She is awful," he said frankly. "Everything I said seemed to shock her. She had never read a shilling novel, she has never cycled, she doesn't roller-skate, she's never been in a side-car, and she has never seen a revue or an aeroplane. According to what she says, she seems to have been vegetating at home all her life, hoping for a miracle to happen."

"Poor Gertie!" sighed Bettina.

"She's no fun," he complained. "It's worse than taking out my own sister. Look here, Bettina, don't you introduce me to any more girls like that."

Bettina giggled.

"I'm at a loose end," she said. "Let's go to the Pictures, shall we?"

His face cleared and he grabbed her arm.

"Rather—and out to supper too. Come and let's get some chocolates, Bettina. You're more my sort!"

* * *

Gertie spoke to Bettina on Monday morning.

"I don't like that young man you introduced me to," she said. "Before we had been ten minutes alone he said, 'Pull your socks up, old girl, or we shall be run over!' Ought he to have said that to me?"

Bettina sighed:

"Oh, he's all right, Gertie, but I think you are a bit too young for him."

Gertie took up her duster.

"I was quite glad to get away from him," she said. "I thought every single minute he was going to kiss me!"

"I don't think you need have worried about that," said Bettina thoughtfully.

So Gertie still goes about alone.

And it would seem that heaven only helps those who help themselves.

C. N.

WIT AND WISDOM.

To be regretted is one of the rarest pleasures of life.

* * *

Never try to conceal anything from a woman—except the truth.

* * *

A man is happiest when he is giving a woman advice on a subject about which he knows nothing.

* * *

The same idiot who thinks he knows how to manage women also thinks he can make a garden pay.

* * *

The man who borrows money from one girl to elope with another ought to make his fortune at company promoting.

* * *

Our friends may be divided into those who know us and those who don't believe we would do any such thing.

* * *

People who complain that they are misunderstood fail to realise how fortunate it is for the rest of the world.

* * *

It's easy enough to write cheques on the Bank of Success, but one has to be properly identified to get them cashed.

* * *

When a writer imagines himself to be ahead of his readers the chances are that he has not yet caught up with them.

* * *

When a man can point with pride to the fact that he never changes his mind, it indicates that he has none to change.

* * *

Some men are receptive opportunists where women are concerned—not to be feared save under deliberate provocation

IN STAGELAND.

A famous actor-manager, who shall be nameless, was talking to me of the trend of twentieth-century play-producing. "It's all sex," he said, "more's the pity; but one sees it in nine out of every ten new plays. Yet the public will have it, apparently, and we must give 'em what they want." And he rattled off the titles of a lot of 1914 comedies, headed, of course, by the inevitable "Mr. Wu" and "The Land of Promise."

* * *

Certainly H. H. Davies' "Outcast," at Wyndham's, is sex, sex, and again sex. It is excellently constructed—perhaps the best bit of stagecraft this writer has yet given us—but neither very pleasant nor plausible, especially in the last act, where the woman declines to marry Geoffrey, but elects to continue as his mistress. Here is some superb acting by Gerald du Maurier and Ethel Levey, who has surely found her métier in the problem-play. As for Du Maurier, his naturalness is so marvellous as not to be like "acting" at all. As his partner, Frank Curzon, once said to me, "Du Maurier's imperturbability is almost uncanny. You simply can't ruffle him, on the stage or off." "Outcast" is also noteworthy for the finished acting of Grace Lane as "the other woman," and of Arthur Wontner.

* * *

It was well-nigh inevitable that the Shirley-Landeck melodrama, "Tommy Atkins," should be revived at this crisis. At the Lyceum the Melvilles have staged this revival handsomely, and its stirring "message" ought to bring forward many recruits for Lord Kitchener's army.

* * *

Next night came Charles Frohman's revival of Sir James Barrie's "Little Minister" at the Duke of York's. It has certainly worn well after its seventeen years of life, and if all the characters in the present cast are not as Scottish as they might be, that's a mere detail. Marie Lohr replaces Winfred Emery as Lady Babbie, and Dion Calthrop replaces Cyril Maude—neither, it must be confessed, being in quite the same class as the originals. In other rôles Miss Jean Cadell looks and speaks delightfully, and, of the "Elders," J. B. Gordon and M. R. Morand are most notable. The latter is the old Savoyard, who has since done so much other good work, and was lately singing "O, Lucky Jim" in "The Belle of New York."

* * *

It is an open secret that Arthur Bourchier had desired a "Henry VIII." play from the moment of his memorable appearance in the title-rôle of Shakespeare's drama at His Majesty's. He rightly turned to Louis Napoleon Parker, who has produced a really excellent Tudor comedy in "Bluff King Hal." In it he takes, so to speak, the "last phase" of that monster monarch, when Henry was wedded to his sixth and last spouse, Catherine Parr, and was rapidly reaching the climax of his senile depravity. The piece is beautifully mounted, and Mr. Bourchier and Miss Violet Vanbrugh are seen at their very best as the protagonists. Other characters are too numerous to mention. Indeed, Mr. Parker might appropriately have titled his effort "Overcast."

"The Silver King" wears well indeed, and its sumptuous revival at the Strand is unmistakably worth while. Apart from H. B. Irving's memorable achievement, the most interesting rôle is Miss Edyth Goodall's Nellie Denver. This actress literally stormed London by her vital performance in "Within the Law," and though she is undoubtedly worthy of better things than melodrama, this will come in time. E. S. Willard's original rôle of the Spider is confided to Julian Royce; the veteran Ambrose Manning repeats his characterisation of thirty years ago; and Arthur Wuliams scores heavily in the "fat" part of the faithful Jaikes.

* * *

Poor old Olympia! First the "Miracle," and then the "Ideal Homes," and now it is filled with suspected Germans. I wonder if Max Reinhardt and the *Evening News* between them couldn't turn it into an exhibition, and make it self-supporting; they could call it "Germania," or the "Miraculous Removal of Germs from our Ideal Homes."

* * *

Robert Lorraine's splendid example in proffering to his country his services—which were immediately accepted—seems to have given all our actors an irrepressible impetus to follow suit. At the offices of the Actors' Association are placards asking recruits to join a Thespian Battalion which is to be formed, and I understand that a number of actors have responded. By the way, are we to hear of Colonel Sir Herbert Tree directing operations from one of the "wings" of the "theatre" of war, with Major Cyril Maude and Captain H. B. Irving charging at the head of a gallant corps of D'Artagnans, who no longer powder their face, but face the powder instead?

* * *

The patriotic "spectacular divertissement," "Europe," looks like proving a mild sort of winner for the Empire. Though, on its earlier nights, it bore signs of hasty production, there is a certain crudity and naïveté about this revue-ballet which is distinctly pleasing, the patriotic appeal is direct and simple, and above all there is an entire absence of the maudlin sentiment with which the variety stage has been deluged during the past few weeks. The Dover Castle scene, with its charming lighting effects, is exceedingly effective, and Miss Phyllis Bedells dances as gracefully as ever. I welcome the return to Empire tradition.

* * *

By the by, the Empire has quite a good all-round show just now. About the only "turn" which I did not enjoy was that of Miss Marie Tempest. This charming lady has no more fervent admirer in London than myself, and that is why I do most seriously counsel her to forget her musical comedy days. Miss Tempest goes to America next week, and I wish her the best of good luck among our Yankee cousins. But don't sing to them, Marie!

"A large number of 'nuts' have enlisted," we read. In "crack" regiments, of course.

* * *

There may have been little "reason" for the war, but it is certainly producing plenty of "rhyme."

* * *

A West End cinema advertises. "The Man in Khaki, 4,000ft. long." We wonder if Kitchener has missed him yet.

* * *

Practically all the Noah's Arks sold in England are manufactured in the Fatherland. No doubt when the environs of Termonde were flooded the Germans wished they had kept a few for themselves.

Racecourses are being used as military camping grounds. Not the first time that our troops have been associated with grand stands.

Soccer Cigarette Competition.

Up to the time of going to Press, the result of No. 1 Competition has not been ascertained, owing to the large number of entries and the somewhat complicated task entailed by the competitors being allowed to select their own fixtures. The result will be published in our next issue.

OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

EASIEST WAY.

Green: My wife sent ten shillings in answer to an advertisement of a sure method of getting rid of superfluous fat.

Brown: And did she get the desired information?

Green: Well, she got a reply telling her to sell it to the soap man.

* * *

HER DEAREST ENEMY.

"Oh, you darling! I am so glad to hear of your happiness. What did Mr. Dickson say when he proposed?"

"He said he had loved me from the very first."

"I should never have suspected that; he is such a young-looking man."

* * *

UP TO DATE.

Old Lady: Do you guarantee these eggs to be strictly fresh?

Grocer (diplomatically): Well, mum, we don't give no written certificate with 'em, but we assure you that no hands came in contact with 'em in the process of manufacture and that since the time of making the contents of them eggs has been enclosed in sealed air-tight coverings.—*Puck.*

* * *

IMPOSSIBLE.

"I was outspoken in my sentiments at the club this afternoon," said Mrs. Garrulous to her husband the other evening.

With a look of astonishment he replied, "I can't believe it, my dear! Who outspoke you?" *National Monthly.*

ARGUING IN A VICIOUS CIRCLE

Cop: "'Ere, why don't yer get up an' go 'ome?"

Smith: "Well, y' shee, 's'like thish (hic). I can't go 'omesh an' face m' wife until I've (hic) hadsh one or two, an' now I've had one er twosh (hic) I can't go 'ome."

—*Sydney Bulletin.*

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